

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE CHULA VISTA MSCP PLANNING AREA

The City is located in the southern portion of the County of San Diego and includes 33,045 acres within its incorporated boundaries. Chula Vista is a growing municipality, with much of the new development occurring in the eastern portion of the City. Recent annexations have expanded the City boundary to the east and northeast, and the adopted General Plan for Chula Vista extends beyond the current jurisdictional boundaries, particularly to the east.

The ***Chula Vista Subarea*** is comprised of that territory located within the incorporated limits of the City, and for which Take Authorization will be granted. Section 3.0 of this Subarea Plan describes the *Chula Vista Subarea* in more detail and provides a summary of conservation and Take estimates for the Subarea. The area and configuration of the *Chula Vista Subarea* is anticipated to change over time as territory is annexed or detached by the City. Take Authorization for future annexation areas will be processed pursuant to Section 5.3.1 of this Subarea Plan.

The ***Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area*** is defined by the City's General Plan boundary and includes a total of 57,849 acres, both within and outside the City, within the unincorporated County of San Diego. Refer to Figure 1-2 for a depiction of the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* and the *Chula Vista Subarea*. Although Take Authorization pursuant to this Subarea Plan will be issued only for the *Chula Vista Subarea*, this document includes information on the larger *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* because of the important inter-relationship between this Subarea Plan and the adopted County of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan/South County Segment, which overlaps the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area*.

Through the combined, cooperative planning efforts of both the City and the County, new urban-level development for the South County/*Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* has been deliberately directed into the City, adjacent to existing infrastructure. Conversely, much of the habitat conservation has been directed into the unincorporated County. Directing development within City limits creates a more compact development form, requires less onerous extension of public services, and results in fewer environmental impacts than would occur from historical suburban, "leap-frog" development patterns. This approach to urban planning enables conservation of habitats and species through dedication of large, contiguous blocks of open space, resulting in superior Preserve design and habitat connectivity.

Assembly of large blocks of conservation land anticipated by the County Subarea Plan/South County Segment will occur only if and when development plans are implemented within the City. Thus, implementation of the Chula Vista Subarea Plan will contribute to the achievement of the County Subarea Plan/South County Segment conservation goals, as well as achieve the conservation goals set forth for the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* and the *Chula Vista Subarea*.

The *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* is divided into three Planning Components: 1) the City Planning Component, 2) the Otay Ranch Planning Component, and 3) the Bonita Planning Component. The three Planning Components are depicted on Figure 2-1, and descriptive

information for each Planning Component is provided in Sections 2.1 through 2.3 of this Subarea Plan.

The City, Otay Ranch, and Bonita Planning Components constitute the entire *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area*. In addition, however, several public and quasi-public conservation efforts overlap the territory of the Planning Area. These separate conservation efforts are described in Section 2.4 and are separate from MSCP planning efforts being undertaken by the City.

2.1 City Planning Component

The City Planning Component lies entirely within the jurisdictional limits of the City and the boundaries of the *Chula Vista Subarea*. This planning component includes all territory located within the incorporated boundaries of the City, exclusive only of that area of the City which is a part of the Otay Ranch General Development Plan/Subregional Plan (GDP/SRP). Take Authorization throughout the City Planning Component will therefore be authorized pursuant to the Chula Vista Subarea Plan and conservation that occurs will become part of the Chula Vista Preserve.

Most of the City Planning Component is area that has been developed or planned for development, and all open space areas are currently reflected on the City's General Plan Land Use Diagram. The majority of the Preserve in the City Planning Component is represented by Preserve designations targeted for 100% Conservation. Approximately 97 acres located within the Otay Valley Regional Park west of Heritage Road and 36 acres located in the incorporated area of the Sweetwater River Valley are designated for 75-100% Conservation (Figure 1-2).

A portion of the Otay Landfill, approximately 137 acres, is included in the City Planning Component as a Minor Amendment Area. Final Preserve boundaries for this area will be determined at a future date through the Minor Amendment Process described in Section 5.1.3.1 of this Plan.

A total of approximately 1,940 acres of habitat will be conserved within the Preserve in the City Planning Component, representing 47% of the total acres of habitat found in this component. Upon completion, the Preserve within the City Planning Component will include representative areas of major canyon systems that support stands of coastal sage scrub and maritime succulent scrub, including Rice and Long canyons. A variety of plant species including San Diego goldenstar (*Muilla clevelandii*), variegated dudleya (*Dudleya variegata*) and Otay tarplant (*Deinandra [Hemizonia] conjugens*) will be conserved, as will known locations of the Quino checkerspot butterfly (QCB). This component will also include rare habitats associated with San Diego Bay as well as portions of the Sweetwater and Otay River systems to the Preserve.

Table 2-1 provides information on existing vegetation found within the City Planning Component and the habitat conservation anticipated to result from implementation of the Chula Vista MSCP Subarea Plan.

Table 2-1: Habitat Conservation Summary for City Planning Component

Vegetation Communities	City Planning Component (acres)	Estimated Preserve Contribution (acres)	Conservation Percentage
Coastal Sage Scrub (CSS)	2,114	1,285	61%
Maritime Succulent Scrub	17	10	59%
Chaparral	1	1	100%
CSS/Chaparral Scrub	0	0	N/A
Grassland (all types)	1,579	310	20%
Oak Woodland	2	2	100%
Tecate Cypress Forest	0	0	N/A
Eucalyptus Woodland	17	2	12%
Southern Coastal Salt Marsh	204	202	99%
Freshwater/Alkali Marsh	13	11	85%
Riparian Forest	10	10	100.0%
Oak Riparian Forest	0	0	N/A
Riparian Woodland	0	0	N/A
Riparian/Tamarisk Scrub	78	68	87%
Open Water/Freshwater	59	24	41%
Disturbed Wetlands	28	15	54%
Natural Flood Channel	13	0	0%
Total	4,135	1,940	47%

The following describes the major private development projects and associated open space included in the Preserve, within the City Planning Component:

2.1.1 Bonita Long Canyon

Bonita Long Canyon lies north of East H Street and south of Bonita Road. This 650-acre, fully-built subdivision includes 768 single-family and 56 apartment homes, an elementary school, equestrian center, and an active park. Approximately 281 acres of open space are preserved as dedicated open space, and a small acreage of Cleveland sage (*Salvia clevelandii*) is preserved.

2.1.2 Rancho Del Rey I, II and III

Rancho Del Rey is located north and south of East H Street between Interstate 805 and Otay Lakes Road, north of Telegraph Canyon Road. The completed project comprises 1,585 acres and includes over 4,000 residential units, a commercial/industrial center, schools, parks, and approximately 549 acres of dedicated open space including Rice Canyon. In addition to on-site preservation, 360 acres of habitat have been conserved

outside the Subarea but within the MSCP Subregional Preserve. The conserved canyons and hillsides contain a variety of coastal sage scrub plant and animal species, including San Diego barrel cactus (*Ferocactus viridescens*), snake cholla (*Opuntia parryi* var. *serpentina*), San Diego ambrosia (*Ambrosia pumila*), coastal California gnatcatcher and coastal cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus couesi*).

2.1.3 Terra Nova

The Terra Nova project contains 419 acres located north and south of East H Street east of Interstate 805. The project has been fully developed with over 900 residential units, retail and commercial office space, an elementary school, and a neighborhood park. One hundred twenty-five acres of open space have been dedicated and will become part of the Preserve. The MSCP open space acreage includes coastal sage scrub, riparian vegetation, and Vernal Pools.

2.1.4 Sunbow II

Sunbow II includes 604 acres located on the south side of Telegraph Canyon Road at Medical Center Drive. The project is a master-planned community consisting of approximately 1,950 residential units, commercial, research and industrial uses, an elementary school site, and a recreation center. One hundred seventy-seven acres are set aside for open space, 65 acres of which are conserved outside the Subarea within the MSCP Subregional Preserve. Principally coastal sage scrub is conserved and some of the Preserve species include: coastal California gnatcatcher, coastal cactus wren, snake cholla, and barrel cactus. The Poggi Canyon portion of the Sunbow site also includes 7.0 acres of Wetlands that are regulated by ACOE and/or CDFG along with additional wetland transition habitat and upland sage scrub and grassland habitats.

2.1.5 Eastlake

This 3,106-acre project is located approximately 7.5 miles east of downtown Chula Vista. Bisected by Otay Lakes Road, the property extends west of the upper and lower Otay Lakes and south of Proctor Valley Road.

The planned community is a mixture of residential, employment-park, office, commercial, recreational and open space uses. The project is regulated by two General Development Plans which authorize construction of over 7,500 residential units, 230 acres of light industrial, 160 acres of retail/commercial, six schools, and 140 acres of parks. To date, over 4,000 residential units, three schools, 70 acres of parks, and a 160-acre golf course have been developed.

Although approximately 400 acres of Eastlake will be dedicated as open space, the entire project area has been extensively dry-farmed for over 100 years, leaving little indigenous habitat. Approximately 67 acres of the Eastlake open space are included in the Preserve, representing primarily coastal sage scrub and non-native grassland.

2.1.6 Rolling Hills Ranch (Salt Creek Ranch)

Rolling Hills Ranch encompasses approximately 1,200 acres and is planned for development of approximately 2,600 residential units. The project has an adopted General Development Plan and SPA Plan and received tentative map approval from the City in 1992. The project entitlements include residential uses, parklands, open space and community facilities, such as schools and a fire station. Regional roadway improvements have been constructed on- and off-site, about 40% of the residential units have been completed to date and approximately 50% of the project has been graded.

Rolling Hills Ranch is a Covered Project as defined by Section 5.1.1 of this Subarea Plan. The Rolling Hills Ranch conditions of coverage are contained in Section 7.5.6.3 of this Subarea Plan. An estimated 314.6 acres of upland habitat will be conserved to mitigate for habitat impacts resulting from Rolling Hills Ranch development, consisting of approximately 265.9 acres of habitat conserved onsite combined with approximately 48.7 acres of habitat conserved in the MSCP Subregional Preserve, within the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area*. Of the 265.9 acres conserved onsite, approximately 214.2 acres are incorporated into the Preserve. These areas include coastal sage scrub, native and non-native grassland and a variety of plant species, including San Diego goldenstar, the narrow endemic plant species variegated dudleya and Otay tarplant, and three known locations of QCB. In addition, the off-site mitigation contributed by Rolling Hills Ranch will include the following:

1. Conservation of 5.8 acres within the San Miguel Mitigation Bank and containing approximately 15,080 Otay tarplants;
2. Conservation of a separate off-site 10-acre parcel located within the MSCP Subregional Preserve, containing a minimum of 15,000 Otay tarplants;
3. Conservation of 30 acres of coastal sage scrub within the San Miguel Mitigation Bank to comply with a Section 7 Consultation completed through the issuance of Biological Opinion 1-5-00-F-F-28 on September 12, 2000;
4. Conservation of approximately 1.9 acres of Otay tarplant within the San Miguel Mitigation Bank to comply with the Section 7 Consultation cited in #3 above; and
5. Conservation of one acre of native grassland within the San Miguel Mitigation Bank to comply with the Section 7 Consultation cited in #3 above.

2.1.7 Bella Lago

Bella Lago lies north of Proctor Valley Road and sits at the base of San Miguel Mountain. It is a planned residential community consisting of 179.6 gross acres with approximately 93.07 acres of buildable area. It is anticipated that the project will be estate, single-family residential units.

The project will result in approximately 86.5 acres of onsite open space dedicated to the Preserve. An additional offsite dedication of approximately 2.5 acres will also be conserved, and contain at least 210 individual Otay Tar Plants within the 2.5 acres. Conserved areas onsite will include coastal sage scrub, non-native grasslands, native grasslands and riparian habitat communities. In addition, populations of the narrow endemic plant species Otay tarplant and variegated dudleya will be conserved onsite. The project has been designed to avoid any direct or indirect impacts to a golden eagle nest in the project vicinity. Conditions for coverage for the Bella Lago project are described in detail in Section 7.5.6.5 of this Subarea Plan.

2.1.8 Midbayfront

The Chula Vista Bayfront Specific Plan Area is generally located west of Interstate 5, south of the Sweetwater River and north of L Street. Within the Specific Plan area is a contiguous area of land known as the Midbayfront, which is comprised of several parcels totaling approximately 128 acres. The Midbayfront planning area abuts the 316-acre Sweetwater Marsh National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and the F and G Street Marsh, a non-contiguous part of the Sweetwater NWR. The Sweetwater NWR is the largest remaining natural wetland on San Diego Bay and includes significant salt marsh habitats which support a number of sensitive plant and animal species, including several endangered species.

The majority of the Midbayfront site is comprised of ruderal land. Habitat on the Midbayfront site includes approximately 2 acres of brackish marsh, 3.7 acres of disturbed wetlands, 1 acre of Riparian Tamarisk Scrub and 8 acres of Diegan coastal sage scrub and disturbed coastal sage scrub.

Midbayfront is not a Covered Project as defined in Section 5.1.1 of this Subarea Plan and will therefore be subject to the new Habitat Loss and Incidental Take Ordinance discussed in Section 5.0. Development at Midbayfront will also be subject to a Local Coastal Plan Amendment.

2.1.9 San Miguel Ranch

The San Miguel Ranch includes approximately 2,595 acres of land located south and east of the Sweetwater Reservoir. San Miguel Ranch is divided into two major units: a northern parcel of 1,852 acres, which is located in the Bonita Planning Component and a southern parcel of 743 acres, which is located in the City Planning Component. The 743-acre southern parcel includes 4.5 acres of property under separate ownership located south of Proctor Valley Road. The northern and southern parcels are separated by property owned by San Diego Gas and Electric, which contains the Miguel Substation and associated transmission lines.

As part of the San Miguel Ranch Conservation Bank Agreement (dated August 27, 1997) between the San Miguel Ranch developers and the Wildlife Agencies, the entire 1,852-acre northern parcel will be conserved. All 1,852 acres of the northern parcel ultimately

will be included in the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge (SDNWR). Of these 1,852 acres 1,186 acres of the NWR property is also designated as conservation bank, within which conservation credits may be purchased.

The southern parcel has been approved for development of approximately 1,394 residential units, 14.3 acres of commercial use, 18.3 acres of institutional uses, and two active parks. Approximately 743 acres of the southern parcel were annexed into the City in December 2000. Prior to annexation, San Miguel Ranch was part of and subject to the County of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan, South County segments, and Take Authorization was provided through the adopted County Subarea Plan. During the annexation process, an MSCP annexation agreement was completed which transferred the County Take Authorization for this project to the City.

The Annexation Agreement Concerning the Conservation and Biological Mitigation Program for the Implementation of San Miguel Ranch Sectional Planning Area Plan and Tentative Tract Map, dated December 2000 (“SMR MSCP Annexation Agreement”) and contained in Appendix C of this Subarea Plan, is an agreement among five parties: the County of San Diego, the City of Chula Vista, the USFWS, the CDFG, and the San Miguel Ranch southern parcel property owner and developer, NNP-Trimark San Miguel Ranch, LLC (“Trimark”). The SMR MSCP Annexation Agreement is intended to accomplish the following:

- Recognize the Take Authorization applicable to the southern parcel under the County MSCP Subarea Plan and provide valid Take Authorization for Chula Vista Covered Species and associated habitats within the southern parcel of San Miguel Ranch prior to issuance of Take Authorization from the Wildlife Agencies to the City for its MSCP Subarea Plan;
- Ensure that conservation required by the adopted County MSCP Subarea Plan, including the conservation of natural open space constituting a minimum of 169 acres on the southern parcel and 166 acres (included in the 1,852 acres referenced above) on the northern parcel, will be realized;
- Require the conservation of 11 supplementary acres of habitat that will significantly add to the long-term viability of the Otay tarplant; and
- Ensure the conservation and management of approximately 352 acres to be transferred to the SDNWR (approximately 186 acres on the southern parcel and 166 acres on the northern parcel).

As required by the SMR MSCP Annexation Agreement, Trimark has entered into agreements to donate to the United States (for inclusion in the National Wildlife Refuge System) three areas of natural open space in the southern parcel and has executed an option agreement with the United States whereby approximately five acres will be added to the western-most of these three open space areas. These three areas comprise 186 acres of natural open space and are designated by this Subarea Plan as 100%

Conservation Areas. (It should be noted that the Chula Vista Subarea Plan only requires that a minimum of 181 acres ultimately be provided as managed open space on the southern parcel. Upon completion of project construction, Trimark intends to add voluntarily to the SDNWR any additional contiguous natural open space that was not required for other elements of the project.)

Overall, development of San Miguel Ranch will result in conservation of a total of 2,038 acres of habitat (over 78% of the total project area). The 1,852-acre northern parcel and approximately 186 acres of conservation on the southern parcel principally contain Diegan coastal sage scrub and include important populations of Otay tarplant. In addition, Wetlands, riparian areas, non-native grassland and disturbed grassland are present on the Preserve within the southern parcel. The Wetlands/riparian areas are being enhanced and created as part of other permitting processes and will include alkali marsh/meadow habitat and riparian woodland habitat.

2.2 Otay Ranch Planning Component

The Otay Ranch Planning Component comprises 22,899 acres of land which is a part of the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP. Due to the joint planning efforts undertaken for the Otay Ranch, this planning component includes territory within the City or *Chula Vista Subarea* and territory within the County of San Diego or *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area*. The GDP/SRP was prepared jointly by the City and the County of San Diego for three major parcels of land: the Otay Valley Parcel (9,449 acres), Proctor Valley Parcel (7,895 acres) and the San Ysidro Parcel (5,555 acres). The majority of the Otay Valley Parcel (approximately 9,100 acres) was annexed into the City in 1997. The remaining 13,799 acres are located in the unincorporated County of San Diego. Conservation that results from implementation of the Otay Ranch Planning Component will occur both within and outside the *Chula Vista Subarea*.

The Otay Ranch GDP/SRP was adopted by both the County Board of Supervisors and the Chula Vista City Council on October 28, 1993. The Otay Ranch GDP/SRP is approved for approximately 24,224 dwelling units on a total of 22,899 acres. The project includes a regional commercial urban center and a University Site, with a potential final population of 68,000 to 70,000 persons. The approved project includes a series of 15 Villages. Within Village cores, densities range from 14.5 to 35.0 dwelling units per acre. Outside Village cores, lower densities reflect anticipated rural-type development. These Villages and rural-density areas combined would allow as many as 13,144 single-family units and 11,080 multi-family units. Five Villages and a regional urban center (Eastern Urban Center) will be served by light rail.

A variety of plans, policies and regulations are relevant to preservation of biological resources throughout the Otay Ranch Planning Component. The Otay Ranch documents and regulations include the Otay Ranch General Development Plan/Subregional Plan, Resource Management Plan, Phases 1 and 2 (adopted October 28, 1993 and June 4, 1996, respectively), as amended, and performance standards for preservation of biological resources incorporated into the Program EIR for the Otay Ranch GDP/SRP (October 1993).

The Otay Ranch Resource Management Plan (“RMP”) is the Framework Management Plan for the Otay Ranch Preserve, and is the critical document for resource protection on the Otay Ranch. The RMP is described in detail in Section 7.6. The RMP Phase 1 (“RMP1”), Phase 2 (“RMP2”) and Phase 2 Appendices are incorporated by reference to this Subarea Plan, and appended as a Framework Management Plan (Appendices D, E and F, respectively). The RMP is expected to evolve over time and may be amended by the City, from time to time, through the use of its jurisdictional authority without amendment to this Subarea Plan, if such amendments to the RMP are consistent with the goals of the MSCP Subregional Plan and this Subarea Plan.

An important part of the RMP1 is the creation of the Otay Ranch Preserve. The Otay Ranch Preserve is a hard-line preserve and includes 11,375 acres to be set-aside as mitigation for impacts to sensitive resources resulting from Otay Ranch development that will occur both within the City and in the County. The Otay Ranch Preserve has been designed and will be managed specifically for protection and enhancement of multiple species present on Otay Ranch. These dedicated conservation lands will also serve to connect large areas of open space through a series of wildlife corridors, including connections between large, regional open spaces, such as Otay Reservoir and San Miguel Mountain. The entire 11,375-acre Otay Ranch Preserve will be included in the MSCP Subregional Preserve.

The RMP1 designates an additional 1,166 acres as Restricted Development Area (RDA), where development is restricted pending future technical studies. The configuration of the RDAs may be revised pending the outcome of the future studies, but the acreage retained in open space must be at least 1,166 acres. While the RMP1 does not target these open space areas specifically for biological conservation, some or all of the RDA land may be added into the MSCP Subregional Preserve (if appropriate in the future).

The Otay Ranch planning documents establish specific conveyance standards for achieving assembly of the 11,375-acre Otay Ranch Preserve, which will mitigate for impacts to biological resources from development projects, including planned infrastructure within the Otay Ranch. A conveyance schedule was adopted as part of the RMP2, which provides that for each acre of development impact to land within Otay Ranch, 1.188 acres of habitat is dedicated into the Otay Ranch Preserve, regardless of the existence of habitat or of the habitat value of the land being developed. Because the first phases of development in Otay Ranch are occurring on the portions of the Otay Valley Parcel where there are few sensitive resources, substantial habitat land has been offered for dedication into the Otay Ranch Preserve well in advance of corresponding impacts.

The dominant feature linking the three Otay Ranch parcels is the Otay River system, which includes a tributary system of canyons and drainage courses and the Otay Lakes. The combination of coastal sage scrub and other habitats found on the Ranch, the varying geography and the presence of several plant communities make the Ranch a unique biological resource. Large undisturbed blocks of coastal sage scrub, maritime succulent scrub, chaparral and other habitats will be preserved throughout the Otay Ranch. Major populations of Covered Species that will be conserved include coastal California gnatcatcher, coastal cactus wren, Vernal Pools, San Diego thorn-mint (*Acanthomintha ilicifolia*), and willow monardella (*Monardella linoides* ssp. *viminea*).

Approximately 11,284 acres of the 11,375-acre Otay Ranch MSCP Preserve represent undisturbed habitat types, as shown on Table 2-2. These 11,284 acres represent 66% of the 17,157 acres of identified vegetation communities throughout the Otay Ranch Planning Component. Conservation of habitat will occur both inside and outside the City boundaries. An estimated 2,617 acres of existing vegetation will be conserved within the *Chula Vista Subarea* (an additional estimated 125 acres of agricultural land and/or disturbed or developed area will also be conserved for a total Preserve within the Otay Ranch Planning Component within the City of 2,742 acres). Of the estimated 8,667 acres of existing habitat to be conserved in the County MHPA, outside the *Chula Vista Subarea*, approximately 3,610 acres (42%) will be conserved as a result of implementation of this Subarea Plan.

Table 2-2: Habitat Conservation Summary for Otay Ranch Planning Component

Vegetation Communities	Vegetation Acres in Otay Ranch Planning Component	Estimated Preserve Contribution within Subarea in Acres	Estimated Preserve Outside Subarea in Acres	Vegetation Preserved in Otay Ranch Planning Component	Overall Conservation percentage
CSS	10,788	1,133	5,985	7,118	66%
Maritime Succulent Scrub	291	180	14	194	67%
Chaparral	2,453	27	1,655	1,682	69%
CSS/Chaparral Scrub	120	0	120	120	100%
Grassland (all types)	2,134	586	286	872	41%
Oak Woodland	209	0	200	200	96%
Tecate Cypress Forest	181	0	181	181	100%
Eucalyptus Woodland	30	16	0	16	53%
Upland subtotal	16,206	1,942	8,441	10,383	64%
Southern Coastal Salt Marsh	0	0	0	0	N/A
Freshwater/Alkali Marsh	166	3	121	124	75%
Riparian Forest	1	0	1	1	100%
Oak Riparian Forest	43	0	35	35	81%
Riparian Woodland	8	0	8	8	100%
Riparian/Tamarisk Scrub	584	526	58	584	100%
Open Water/Freshwater	3	0	3	3	100%
Disturbed Wetlands	0	0	0	0	N/A
Natural Flood Channel	146	146	0	146	100%
Wetlands Subtotal	951	675	226	901	95%
Total	17,157	2,617	8,667	11,284	66%

The following describes the major geographical and biological features of each of the Otay Ranch parcels, and development planned for the approximately 9,100-acre portion of Otay Ranch within the *Chula Vista Subarea*.

2.2.1 Otay Valley Parcel

Most of the Otay Valley Parcel (9,100 acres) was annexed into the City in 1997. The southern portion of the parcel is characterized by a flat mesa that is incised by a series of tributary canyons draining to the Otay River Valley, which is the focus of the area, and bisects the southern portion east to west. North of the River Valley, the property is characterized by rolling hillsides. Onsite elevations range from 160 feet above mean sea level (msl) along the bottom of the Otay River Valley to 670 feet msl in the central ridge of the parcel. The natural landforms associated with this parcel are Wolf Canyon, Salt Creek Canyon, Poggi Canyon, Johnson Canyon, O'Neal Canyon and Rock Mountain.

The Otay Valley Parcel contains approximately 1,825 acres of coastal sage scrub. Maritime succulent scrub habitat is concentrated in three general locations on the Otay Valley Parcel: in the western and eastern corners and in the central southern area, covering 285 acres in all. Other vegetation found on the Otay Valley Parcel includes seven acres of chamise chaparral, 1,310 acres of non-native grassland, and 12 acres of southern willow scrub. Baccharis scrub, Baccharis floodplain scrub, and tamarisk scrub are also present. The Otay Valley Parcel contains Vernal Pools and associated mima mound topography. These Vernal Pools are generally located south of the Otay River. Sightings of sensitive animal species since 1989 or later include the American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), common barn owl (*Tyto alba*), coastal California gnatcatcher, yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*), cactus wren, blue grosbeak (*Passerina caerulea*), and Bells sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli belli*).

Subsequent to annexation into the City, the approved development in this area of the Otay Ranch has been initiated. Sectional Planning Area One (SPA One) of the proposed Otay Ranch development was approved on June 4, 1996. This SPA Plan consists of Villages One and Five encompassing 1,375 acres and allows a total of 6,201 dwelling units. Village One and Village Five are both under construction. SPA One also includes four neighborhood parks and two elementary schools.

A future university is also planned for development within the Otay Valley Parcel. This Chula Vista MSCP Subarea Plan includes revisions to the Otay Ranch Preserve to refine the boundaries of the University Site approved by the Otay Ranch GDP and RMP2. The University Site is discussed in more detail in Section 3.1.6 of this Subarea Plan.

2.2.2 Proctor Valley Parcel

The Proctor Valley portion of Otay Ranch includes 7,895 acres and is composed of four unconnected parcels of land located north and east of Otay Lakes. The lands involved generally consist of broad gentle mesas gradually rising northward. The terrain in the central and eastern portions of the parcels becomes steep and rugged as the Jamul

Mountains gain elevation. Elevations range from approximately 500 feet msl near Upper Otay Lake to 1,550 feet msl in the southeast corner. The major landforms are the Jamul and Callahan Mountains.

The Proctor Valley Parcel contains approximately 4,843 acres of coastal sage scrub. Additional significant resources within the Proctor Valley parcel include 569 acres of southern mixed chaparral, approximately 49 acres of valley needlegrass grassland, and 138 acres of alkali meadows. Coast live oak woodland covers 176 acres while small areas contain southern willow scrub and eucalyptus. Vernal Pools occur primarily on weathered alluvial soils of mesas and floodplain terraces in Proctor Valley. Sightings of sensitive animal species since 1989 or later include the coastal California gnatcatcher, loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Bells sage sparrow, blue grosbeak, two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondi*), rufous-crowned sparrow (*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*), Quino checkerspot butterfly (*Euphydryas editha quino*) and the coastal rosy boa (*Lichanura trivirgata roseofusca*).

2.2.3 San Ysidro Parcel

The 5,555-acre San Ysidro portion of Otay Ranch is composed of two disconnected parcels located in the southeastern portion of Otay Ranch. The terrain is highly varied: portions slope steeply southward toward the mountains, while the north is more level.

The major landforms associated with this parcel are the Little and Big Cedar Canyons, and Hubbard Springs. Elevations range from 550 feet msl near Lower Otay Lake to 1,550 feet msl in the southeast corner of the parcel.

The San Ysidro Parcel contains important biological resources. Coastal sage scrub can be found on 3,698 acres of this parcel. Approximately 469 acres of uniform stands of chamise occur on mesas and some gentle slopes in the Otay Lakes portion of the parcel. In addition, approximately 474 acres of non-native grassland, 5 acres of coast live oak woodland, 75 acres of coast southern live oak riparian forest, 7 acres of sycamore alluvial woodland, and 165 acres of southern interior cypress forest occur on the San Ysidro Parcel. A small number of Vernal Pools occur on the level terraces south of the eastern arm of Lower Otay Reservoir. Most of the Vernal Pools are situated within the City of San Diego. Some of the larger contiguous masses of habitat within the San Ysidro Parcel include numerous sensitive plants and animals. Sightings of sensitive animal species since 1989 or later include the coastal California gnatcatcher, blue grosbeak, and San Diego horned lizard (*Phrynosoma coronatum*).

2.3 Bonita Planning Component

The Bonita Planning Component lies within the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* but is entirely outside the *Chula Vista Subarea*. The area is included as part of the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* because it is located within the City's General Plan Area, and development within the City has resulted in significant contribution of MSCP conservation located in this component area.

The Bonita Planning Component is entirely within the adopted County of San Diego Subarea Plan and includes property within both the Metro/Lakeside/Jamul and the South County Segments. Like the City Planning Component, most of this component area is built out or planned for development. Land which is incorporated into the Metro/Lakeside/Jamul segment is subject to the County's Biological Mitigation Ordinance (BMO). Areas which are located within the South County Segment are designated for development or Preserve through "hard-lines" and are not subject to the BMO. Any future annexations of land from the Bonita Planning Component into the City will be subject to MSCP Annexation Agreements pursuant to Section 5.3.1 of this Subarea Plan, insuring that conservation is consistent with the County Subarea Plan.

Preservation planned for the Bonita Planning Component includes large, undisturbed blocks of coastal sage scrub and chaparral, and will conserve major populations of Covered Species such as the coastal California gnatcatcher and Otay tarplant. The County's Subarea Plan proposes conservation of approximately 1,982 acres, or 53% of the total 3,752 acres of habitat found in this component. This conservation estimate may be exceeded, due to the unanticipated and now completed purchase of the 309-acre "Bonita Meadows" property by Caltrans for mitigation conservation.

The largest contiguous area of Conservation in the Bonita Planning Component consists of the 1,852-acre northern San Miguel property. Conservation of this rich habitat area is integral to the San Miguel Ranch agreements described in Section 2.1.9. The agreements provide that development may occur on portions of the San Miguel southern parcel within the City, while at least 181 acres of valuable habitat on the southern parcel and the entire habitat on the northern parcel are dedicated to conservation. Both the Bonita Meadows and the San Miguel Ranch conservation efforts provide important habitat connections between the City and County Subareas.

2.4 Other Public Agency Conservation Efforts

In addition to this Subarea Plan, other conservation efforts are being undertaken by public and/or quasi-public agencies that will lead to conservation of important habitat areas within the *Chula Vista Planning Area*. Together with this Subarea Plan, these conservation efforts will conserve key areas of sensitive habitat in the Southern San Diego region, including core biological resource areas and associated habitat linkages identified in the MSCP Subregional Plan. Core areas of conservation include the Sweetwater River/Sweetwater Reservoir/San Miguel Mountain area and the Otay Lakes/Otay Mesa/Otay River Valley area. Key linkages identified by the MSCP Subregional Plan that will be provided, in part, through this Subarea Plan and the projects summarized in the following Sections 2.4.2 – 2.4.9 include the Sweetwater River to the San Diego Bay, San Miguel Mountain to Rancho Del Rey, and significant portions of the western Otay River Valley.

2.4.1 Otay Valley Regional Park

The City is a participating local agency in planning for the Otay Valley Regional Park (OVRP). This major planning project will result in a regional park consisting of approximately 8,700 acres. The park includes land within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Cities of San Diego and Chula Vista and the County of San Diego. Approximately

3,861 acres of the OVRP lie within the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area*, and an estimated 3,010 acres will be conserved within the *Chula Vista Subarea* (2,742 acres in the Otay Ranch Planning Component and 268 acres west of Heritage Road in the City Planning Component). All three local agencies involved in planning for the Park are responsible for MSCP management within their respective jurisdictions.

The OVRP will provide for biological open space, active and passive recreation areas, trail corridors, staging areas, overlook areas, and interpretive centers. The conservation open space areas identified in the OVRP Concept Plan are intended to protect biologically sensitive habitat areas and provide a regional wildlife corridor from South San Diego Bay to the Otay Lakes. These areas consist of Wetland areas, permanent and seasonal ponds, Vernal Pools, steep slopes, biologically sensitive areas, habitat linkages, and disturbed areas where resources will be enhanced. The boundary of the OVRP open space is the same as the boundary of the MHPA designated in the MSCP Subarea Plans for the Cities of San Diego and Chula Vista and the County of San Diego South County Segment.

The uses identified in the OVRP Concept Plan are consistent with the goals of both the MSCP Subregional Plan and this Subarea Plan. Additional information pertaining to allowable park uses is described in Section 6.3.4 of this Subarea Plan.

2.4.2 Sweetwater Valley

The Sweetwater Valley runs from the Sweetwater Reservoir to San Diego Bay. The Sweetwater River meanders its way through the valley and serves as a significant biological linkage.

The Sweetwater Valley Regional Park is located in the valley in the unincorporated areas of the County of San Diego between the Sweetwater Reservoir on the east and Interstate 805 on the west. Situated centrally in the valley and bisecting the regional park is the 122-acre Chula Vista Municipal Golf Course and 60-acre Rohr Park, both located within the City boundary.

The Sweetwater Valley Regional Park, golf course, and Rohr Park serve as an open space connection through the Sweetwater Valley. Recreational activities such as picnicking, baseball, softball, golf, hiking and horseback riding occur throughout the valley in designated areas. Habitat located in the City's section of the Sweetwater Valley is associated with the Sweetwater River which traverses the golf course. These wetland habitats include natural flood channels, freshwater/alkali marsh, riparian tamarisk scrub, southern coastal salt marsh, and freshwater.

Existing uses within the 553-acre unincorporated portion of the Park include several houses, an equestrian center, limited retail commercial, a golf driving range, a pine tree nursery, abandoned dairy buildings, trails and a campground. Sensitive plants present in the area include Otay tarplant, San Diego barrel cactus, San Diego marsh elder (*Iva*

hayesiana), California adolphia (*Adolphia californica*), San Diego sunflower (*Viguiera laciniata*), variegated dudleya and ashy-spike moss (*Selaginella cinerascens*).

2.4.3 San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex

San Diego National Wildlife Refuge, Otay/Sweetwater Unit – The USFWS has established the San Diego NWR for purposes of protecting and managing key habitats for endangered and threatened species and maintaining areas of high biological diversity in San Diego County. The Otay/Sweetwater Unit of the San Diego NWR study area encompasses a refuge acquisition boundary of 43,860 acres located in southwestern San Diego County. This NWR area partly overlaps the *Chula Vista Subarea*, principally in the eastern portion of Otay River Valley in the Otay Ranch Planning Component of this Subarea Plan. Lands contained within this refuge acquisition boundary remain under the control of the owner until they are purchased by the USFWS or placed under a management agreement. Land managed by the Service is achieved through leases and cooperative agreements, conservation easements and fee-title acquisition. Additional lands to the Otay/Sweetwater Unit can also be acquired through donations, transfers or exchanges. Lands acquired by the Service will be managed according to the Comprehensive Management Plan and step-down Refuge management plans prepared for the Otay/Sweetwater Unit.

San Diego National Wildlife Refuge, South Bay Unit – The USFWS has designated 3,940 acres of South San Diego Bay as a wildlife refuge. This “South San Diego Bay Unit of the San Diego NWR” is partly located within the jurisdictional boundaries of Chula Vista. Within the refuge boundaries, USFWS will protect and manage the remaining wildlife habitat in and around the southern end of San Diego Bay using a variety of habitat protection methods. Coordinating with landowners, local agencies and the U.S. Navy, the USFWS is developing a management plan to conserve habitat resources through land acquisition, protection under the Sikes Act through interagency agreements with the Navy, and cooperative agreements, coordinated planning and shared resources with local, Federal and State agencies. Lands acquired by the USFWS through purchase, dedication, lease and/or conservation easements will be managed in accordance with the NWR System Improvement Act of 1997.

Sweetwater Marsh National Wildlife Refuge – The USFWS has designated a 316-acre site abutting San Diego Bay. Refuge lands surround the City of Chula Vista's MidBayfront planning area on three sides. The Refuge was established in 1988 as protected habitat to support several endangered or threatened species including the Light-footed Clapper Rail, California Least Tern and Western Snowy Plover. The Refuge also supports a population of the endangered plant salt-marsh bird's beak and many other rare or sensitive species including a population of Belding's Savannah sparrow, a state listed endangered species, as well as many species of migratory birds. The use of Sweetwater Marsh and F & G Street Marshes by shore and wading birds is extremely high given these areas contain over 90 percent of the remaining coastal salt marsh habitat found adjacent to San Diego Bay.

2.4.4 San Diego Port District

The Port District of San Diego has jurisdiction over property within the City's jurisdictional boundary but below the San Diego Bay mean high tide line. In addition, the Port has purchased the electric power-plant site located on San Diego Bay. The Port District is responsible for Preserve planning and maintenance within its jurisdiction, including the powerplant site. The Port is also participating with the United States Navy in the preparation of an Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan for San Diego Bay, which will include evaluation of natural resources on both Port and Navy lands.

2.4.5 Otay Water District

Otay Water District (OWD) owns approximately 670 acres of property located within the City's incorporated limits. Directly north of the Rolling Hills Ranch project, OWD owns approximately 509 acres. Approximately 250 acres of this area have been developed as a golf course and 230 acres have been set aside for habitat management. A portion of the remaining acreage is an ancillary operations area used by the OWD. The balance of the 670 acres owned by OWD is either utilized for existing water facilities or are lands acquired for Future Facilities or mitigation. OWD has prepared a draft NCCP Plan which includes its properties within the City as well as OWD activities elsewhere in its service area.

2.4.6 City of San Diego "Cornerstone Lands"

The City of San Diego Water Department owns and operates the Otay Lakes as a potable water resource for San Diego residents. Approximately 1,800 acres of land surrounding the Lakes are owned by the City of San Diego. The 1,800 acres and the biological resources that they support are subject to the Cornerstone Lands Conservation Bank Agreement between the City of San Diego and the Wildlife Agencies (dated July 16, 1997). These lands are within the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* but outside the *Chula Vista Subarea*. They are incorporated into the City of San Diego MSCP Subarea Plan and form a cornerstone for a natural open space corridor in the South Bay area. Otay Lakes Road and Proctor Valley Road may be realigned and/or improved on these cornerstone lands.

2.4.7 Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) adopted the South Coast Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision on May 26, 1994. The BLM plan addresses management of approximately 296,000 acres of BLM-administered public land in the southwestern counties of California. The San Diego County Management Area located in the Otay Mountain Area includes 65,000 acres of BLM public land. This area is located immediately south of the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* and outside the *Chula Vista Subarea*.

In June 1994, the BLM, the Wildlife Agencies and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation in habitat conservation planning and management, resolution of conflicts between land management prescriptions and conservation objectives, and cooperation in acquiring other habitat areas and corridors. In December 1999, then-President Clinton signed the “Otay Mountain Wilderness Act,” which ensures conservation and management of over 18,000 acres of the Otay Mountain BLM land specifically for habitat conservation purposes.

The South Coast Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision identified the following resource objectives for the San Diego County Management Area:

1. Emphasize protection and enhancement of sensitive species and habitat and open space values.
2. Improve management effectiveness within the management area through disposal of isolated parcels and consolidation of BLM public land ownership.
3. Enhance habitats for all wildlife species, including deer and quail.
4. Provide opportunities for low-impact recreation through provision of facilities and services.

2.4.8 Sweetwater Authority

Sweetwater Authority Water District owns approximately 243 acres located along the southern banks of the Sweetwater Reservoir within the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* but outside the *Chula Vista Subarea*. Equivalent NCCP Preserve planning for this property is currently being prepared by the Sweetwater Authority.

2.4.9 San Diego Gas and Electric

San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E), a wholly owned subsidiary of Sempra Energy, owns approximately 308 acres of property located on the west slopes of Mother Miguel Mountain. The property, which is within the *Chula Vista MSCP Planning Area* but outside the *Chula Vista Subarea*, includes the Miguel Substation, a bulk power and transmission facility that interconnects SDG&E’s system with Mexico and other utilities to the east (Arizona and New Mexico) and is subject to the SDG&E Subregional NCCP Plan, adopted in 1995. The property is managed for both utility activities and conservation according to the SDG&E Plan. Future facility expansions are planned.